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A HISTORY OF THE ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



1921–2001



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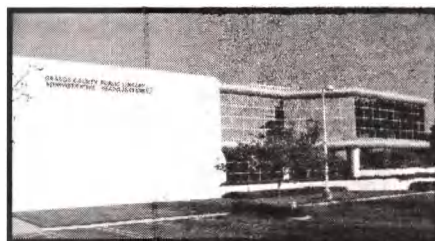
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ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

1921—2001

REVISED AND UPDATED

COMPILED BY:

DANI PORTER

**SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA
AUGUST, 2001**

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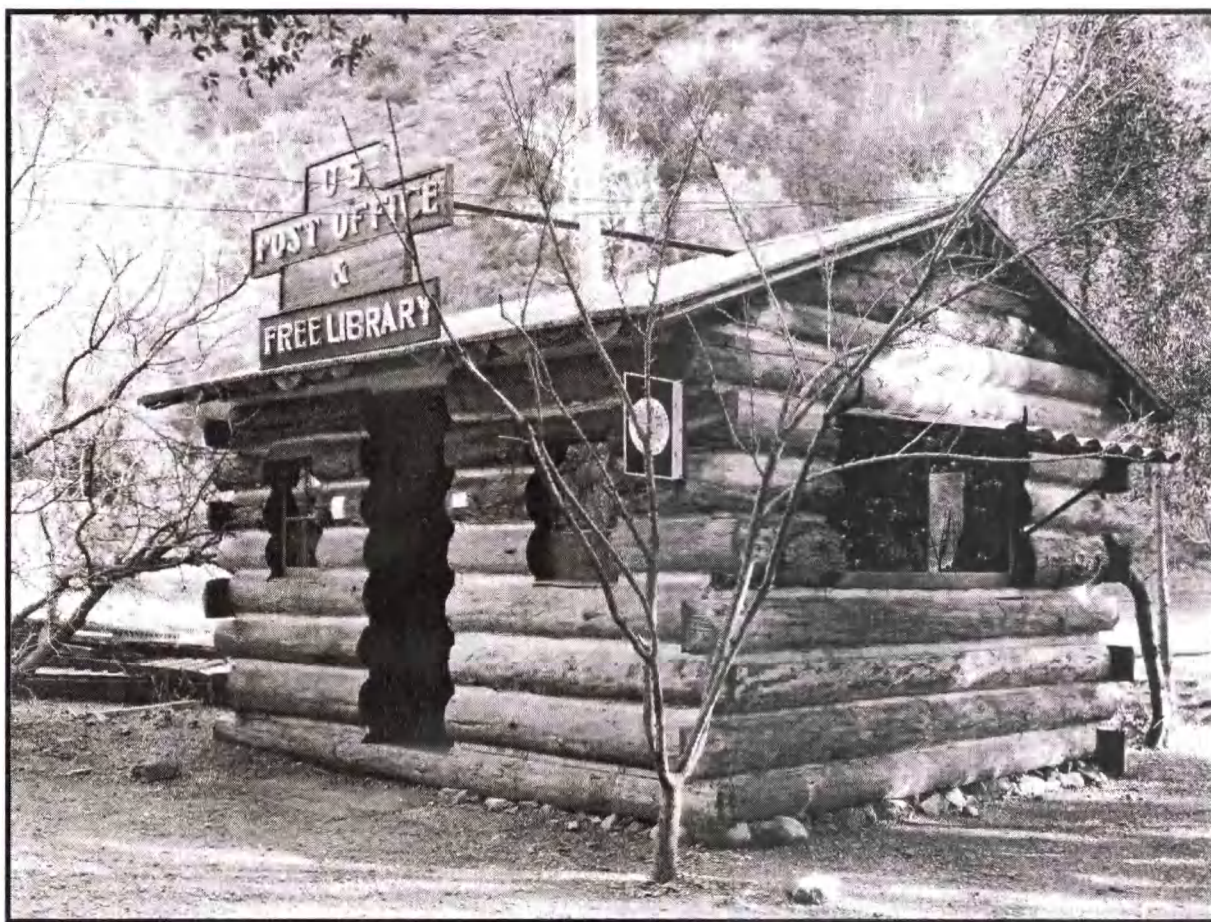
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Silverado Branch Library and U.S. Post Office, circa 1931.

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Preface

The first history of the Orange County Free Library, as it was originally named, was published in 1965.

In 1988, as Orange County approached its Centennial Celebration, an update was begun and later published in 1991 as a 70-year history.

This retrospective was created to celebrate 80 years of library service to the County of Orange.



Mission Statement

To provide a framework for the delivery
of relevant resources meeting the
educational,
cultural,
civic,
business,
and life-long learning needs
for residents of all ages of member communities
through a network
of locally focused libraries in which
knowledgeable, service-oriented
staff members offer access to
information, books and other materials
in a variety of formats
utilizing contemporary technology,
and which encourage and foster
reciprocal community involvement to
educate,
inform,
and enrich
the lives of a diverse population.



ORANGE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Library's History

The Orange County Free Library was established on December 9, 1919, under state statute by the Orange County Board of Supervisors. At that time, there were 11 public libraries serving residents of Orange County. Of the 11, municipal libraries were operating in the cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Orange, and Santa Ana, and library districts were operating in Buena Park, Placentia and Yorba Linda. Subscription (members only) libraries were located in Buena Park and Westminster.

When the resolution establishing the Orange County Free Library was passed, its mission was to provide free access to library materials for all Orange County citizens not served by existing libraries and library districts.

On August 1, 1921, the county library system was fully operational and open for business. The first County Library office was in a rented room at 508 North Main Street in Santa Ana, jointly occupied with the County's Farm Advisor and his staff. Margaret E. Livingston, the first County Librarian, came to Santa Ana from Colusa County, California, and began working on August 1, along with two assistants, Arline Davis and Frances Stockebrand.

The Orange County Free Library's first eight branches opened in 1921, and included Brea, Costa Mesa, Garden Grove, Laguna Beach, La Habra, San Juan Capistrano, Seal Beach and Westminster.

In 1920, the U.S. Census showed Orange County with a total population of 61,375. At the end of the first fiscal year, 1921/22, the Orange County Free Library had 10,463 books serving 4,609 registered borrowers, with a budget of \$13,735.08. The following fiscal year, the collection grew to 22,019 volumes, and registered library users increased to 7,393, with a budget of \$19,616.80. In 1923/24, during its third year of operation, the library boasted 36,319 volumes, registrations grew to 12,514, and the budget was \$20,933.42. In 1922/23, during the Library's first year of Interlibrary Loan service, a total of 10 books were lent to five County-area libraries which were not part of the County system.

Today, the Orange County Public Library, as it was renamed by Board action in 1967, has 27 branch libraries, one residents-only library at the Orange-wood Children's Home, and five additional public branch libraries in the planning stages. For fiscal year 2001, ending June 30, 2001, the Library served over 1.426 million Orange County citizens, answered over 1.6 million questions, and circulated a record-setting 6,263,480 items. The 2000/2001 budget totaled \$25,440,873, and OCPL's Interlibrary Loan lent 1,627 items to libraries throughout California and the U.S., as well as Denmark, Korea, and Slovenia.

Orange County Librarians

Margaret Livingston served as County Librarian from 1921 until her death in 1933. Since then, County Librarians have included:

Dorothy E. Wents Iams	1933—1938
Carma Russell Zimmerman	1938—1942
Margaret Cotant Morrison	1942—1968
Harry M. Rowe, Jr.	1968—1978
Elizabeth Martinez Smith	1979—1990
John M. Adams	1991—



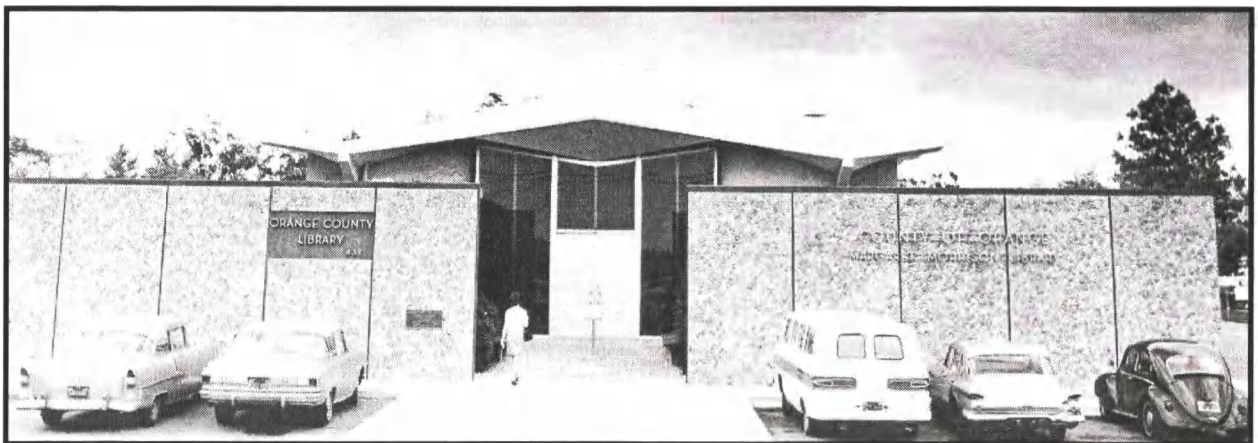
County Librarian Margaret Morrison in County car, July 1953.

Library Administrative Headquarters

From 1921, the Orange County Free Library spent its first three years with the County's Farm Advisor and his group at 508 N. Main in Santa Ana, and has since been housed in a variety of places and spaces:

Hall of Records, Room 112	1924-1931
Court House Annex, Room 148 (Room 108)	1931-1946
1104-B West 8th Street, Santa Ana	1946-1961
12392 Placentia Avenue, Orange	1961-1963
431 South Manchester, Orange (431 The City Drive)	1963-1990
1501 E. St. Andrew Place, Santa Ana	1991-

Today, the library system's administrative employees support 28 libraries. Departments include Adult Services, Bibliographic Services, Business Services, Community Relations, Facilities, Construction & Maintenance; Human Resources, Information Systems, and Youth Services.



431 So. Manchester, Orange, 1968.

Former Branch Libraries

For 80 years, in keeping pace with the changing landscape of Orange County, many libraries have opened and expanded; some have closed, with their collections and resources filling new branches; while others have branched off to become municipal libraries.

Former Orange County libraries include: Alamitos, Atwood, Barber City, Bolsa, Boy Scout Camp, C.C. C. Camp, Centralia, County Hospital, County Jail, Delhi, Diamond, El Modena, El Toro County Store, Farm Advisor, Girl Reserves, Harper-Fairview (Costa Mesa), Hawthorne, Health Department, Hewes Park, Industrial Farm, Katella, Kiddie Camp, Lacy Security, Laurel, Leisure World, Midway City, Mission Viejo, Modjeska, Ocean View, Olinda, Olive, Orange County Juvenile Home, Orange County Women's Jail, Orangethorpe, Richfield, San Joaquin, Santa Ana Gardens, Savanna, Serra, Shadybrook, South Laguna, Trabuco, Trabuco Oaks, Welfare Department, Wintersburg, the Y.M.C.A. Camp (later Boy's Camp), and Yorba.

OCPL also offered Bookmobile service (later called Extension Services) between 1959 and 1982. The two 29' long, Gerstenslager-bodied Fords made 150 countywide stops per month during their peak in the early 1970's. Once branch libraries were opened in outlying areas, the operation ceased.



Trabuco Branch Library, June 1957.



Santa Ana Gardens, June 1957.

Current Library Projects

This year, OCPL has five new facilities in the works:

Costa Mesa Technology Branch

The Costa Mesa Technology Branch will house personal computers for OCPL's Catalog, Database, and Internet use. A small popular reading collection will also be available, and library materials from other OCPL branches will be picked up and delivered. Technology training to the public will be the branch's main focus. The Library will be located at 3033 Bristol Avenue, Suite Q, (at the corner of Paularino Avenue), in Costa Mesa.

Foothill Ranch Library

Foothill Ranch Library is being designed by Robert R. Coffee Architect + Associates of Corona del Mar. The 10,750 square foot library will include special features such as: Children's story tower, literacy room, young adult area, and community meeting room. The branch will be located at the corner of Rue de Fortuna and Cabriole Way, and will offer over 60,000 volumes upon opening.

Ladera Ranch Library

Planned as a joint-use facility with the Capistrano Unified School District (CUSD), the Ladera Ranch Library will be located on the campus of the CUSD elementary and middle schools.

Laguna Hills Technology Branch

The Laguna Hills Technology Branch will be similar to Costa Mesa's Technology Branch, with personal computers for library use, a small collection of books and other materials, and technology training classes. The branch will be located within the Laguna Hills Community Center and Sports Complex.

Wheeler Branch Library

Irvine's Wheeler Branch is named for Katie Irvine Wheeler (Mrs. Charles S.), of Corona del Mar, a granddaughter of James Irvine II. The Library, located in historical Irvine Park, will replicate the exterior of the Irvine family's 7,000-square-foot ranch house, which was built in 1876 and demolished in 1967. A basement level will be added to make for a 10,000-square-foot library facility. Rooms will be available for community use and the branch will display historical photographs and memorabilia.

A World of Resources

In 1921, with eight branches operating, the Orange County Free Library had a total of 10,463 books. Today, OCPL's collection offers over 2.55 million volumes and continues to grow. Current resources include books, periodicals, music scores, audiotapes, videos, compact discs, vertical files, and electronic materials.

As Orange County evolves, so too does the Library's resources. OCPL offers resources in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Farsi, French, German, Russian, and Braille.



Resources at La Palma Library.

READ/Orange County

READ/Orange County (READ/OC) was created in 1991 by a grant from the California Library Services Act, and is now funded principally by OCPL, with assistance from State, Federal, foundation, private grants, and gifts. READ/OC is the County's premiere adult literacy services program offering no-cost direct service, small group, one-to-one, and family tutoring services. In 2001, READ/OC was the recipient of the National Association of Counties' Acts of Caring Award and the President's Points of Light Service Award.

READ/OC's mission is "to create a more literate community by providing diversified services of the highest quality to all who seek them." Since July 1992, the program has taught over 50 Basic Tutor Training Workshops, certified over 950 tutors, and supported an average of 280 tutor/learner pairs monthly. Together with the Orange County Sheriff-Coroner's Department, the program provides tutoring within the five Orange County jails through its Working for In-mate Literacy Now, or WIN, program.

READ/OC provides services in all communities served by the 28 branches of OCPL, in addition to Coto de Caza, Dove Canyon, Foothill Ranch, Laguna Hills, Orange, Santa Ana, and Trabuco Canyon, as well as portions of Fullerton and Yorba Linda.

The program also has dedicated Literacy Centers housed in eight OCPL branches including Aliso Viejo, Brea, Garden Grove Regional, Laguna Niguel, La Habra, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Juan Capistrano Regional, Tustin, and Westminster libraries, providing specialized collections for tutors and learners.

In September 1996, READ/OC began its Families for Literacy program, which works with adult non- or low-level readers with at least one child in the home under age five. Parents are taught to select reading materials for their children, and learn to encourage reading as a positive activity. In 2001, Families for Literacy is helping to break the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.

Friends of the Library

The first of OCPL's Friends of the Library groups was begun in Laguna Beach in 1955, and called the Laguna Beach Library Building Association. While the group was made up of representatives from service organizations for the purpose of providing additional items to the Library, it later grew into the Friends of the Laguna Beach Library. In 1960, the Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries was organized, and by 1962, La Habra, Garden Grove Libraries, and Brea all had library support groups. Subsequently, Friends of the Library groups were initiated with the building of new libraries.

Today, every branch from Aliso Viejo to Westminster (including the planned Foothill Ranch Library), has a Friends of the Library group. Each offers a wealth of generous support through key volunteer hours, book sales, special fundraising events, and more. The dedication and enthusiasm of Friends of the Library members allow OCPL's branches to bring enhanced library services to their communities through the purchase of supplemental library resources, replacement materials, subscriptions, summer reading, adult, teen, and children's programs, office equipment, furniture and shelving, and computers.

As part of their fundraising efforts, many of the Friends' groups operate used bookstores that are part of the branch libraries; while others affiliated with smaller branches do their book sale fundraising via book carts and shelving within the libraries. Friends of the Library members as well as volunteers staff these facilities, which helped to bring the overall amount donated by Friends groups in 2000/2001 to OCPL branches to over \$635,000.

Libraries with stand-alone bookstores include: Aliso Viejo, Brea, Dana Point, El Toro, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove Regional, Irvine's Heritage Park Regional and University Park, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel, La Habra, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Mary Wilson/Seal Beach, Tustin, and Westminster.



San Clemente Friends' Bookstore.

Libraries with book nooks, or book sale areas include: Costa Mesa and Mesa Verde, Cypress, Chapman and West Garden Grove, La Palma, Los Alamitos/Rossmoor, Silverado, Stanton, and Villa Park.

In 1986 OCPL established the Friends of the Library Foundation to promote countywide support of public libraries.

The annual "Friends of the Library Appreciation Day," which recognizes the exceptional spirit of all OCPL Friends' members, is now in its 21st year.

Library Technology

A card catalog organized access to branch resources from 1925 to 1971, which was replaced with a computer-generated book catalog, followed by a catalog on microfilm, and finally, a computerized system in 1984. This \$2 million automated circulation control system was the largest of its kind for a public library at that time.

In keeping with technological advances in the library field, by December 1999 OCPL had installed 400 personal computers throughout its 28 libraries, providing patrons with an up-to-the-minute graphics-based Windows operating system. In 2001, these workstations offer a user-friendly face for searching OCPL's resources once accessed by the card catalog, including books, audio/visual materials, and periodicals. Special features include library patron record access in which users can place holds and view which items are checked out, see several best seller lists which are updated regularly, and utilize online databases, which allow information searching on dozens of topics including literature, law, general reference, health and business.

In April 2000, the library began offering remote access to its catalog and databases through its Web site. Today, anyone with Internet access can use the library's Web site (www.ocpl.org) as a portal for resource and information searching, just as they would at their local library.

In 2001, OCPL teamed up with the Metropolitan Cooperative Library System to provide live online reference assistance anytime, anyplace to OCPL's patrons 24 hours a day, seven days a week. LION, or Librarians Online, provides reference support from professional reference librarians in real time to library patrons via the system's Web site. During its first week, the program logged over 100 questions on topics from history to current events.



*The card catalog in its heyday,
July 1957.*

*Left to right: Headquarters staff
Alice Vining and Chris Douglas.*

OCPL Today

In 1921 Orange County Free Library patrons could come to any branch library to check out a book. In 2001, an OCPL patron can access information in print and electronic formats, even outside the library's walls.

Library resources have grown and evolved from the 10,463 books offered in 1921, to today's collection encompassing books, magazines, newspapers, audio books, videos, cassettes, compact discs, DVDs, and computers with access to databases filled with full-text articles and reference materials. Internet access at every OCPL branch opens the World Wide Web to patrons as well.

In 1921, eight branch libraries were open six days per week. Library service at each was offered Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

Today, service hours continue to increase with library service offered daily at nine branches, six days per week at nine branches, and five days per week at nine branches. Reference service is offered around-the-clock through Librarians Online (LION).

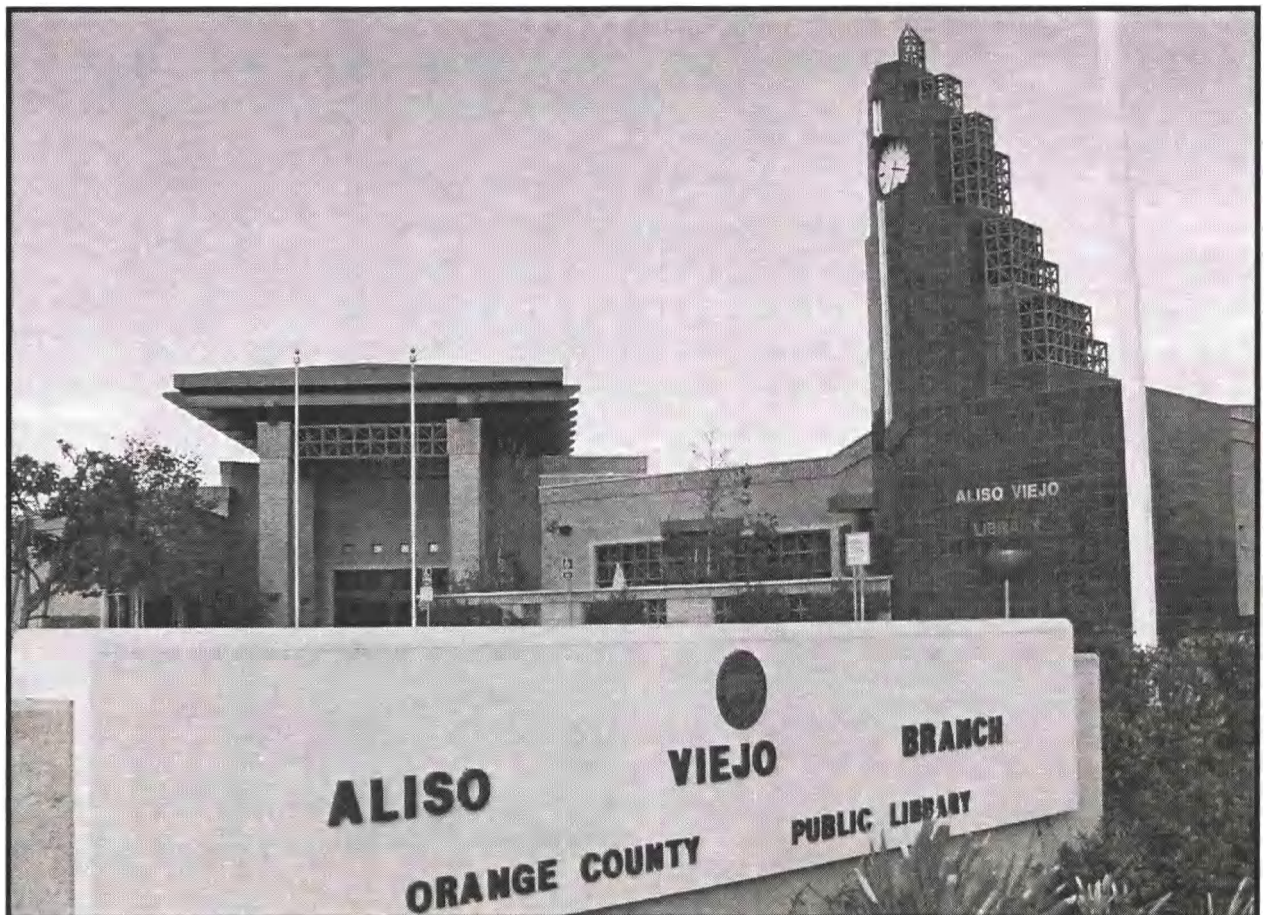
In spite of having 400 new personal computers throughout its libraries, OCPL is the busiest it has ever been with traditional library services in demand more than ever before.

In 2001, OCPL continues to break annual records for circulation, visitors, reference assistance and library programs. During its most recent fiscal year, 6,264,175 items were checked out and 5,684,975 people visited the branches. OCPL's borrowing rate ranks among the highest in California for library systems serving 500,000 or more, with the equivalent of every person in the Library's service area borrowing 4.4 items annually.

OCPL's patrons also hooked up with librarians to get answers to all kinds of questions, from the everyday to the extraordinary, as librarians answered 1,622,015 questions in 2000/2001. In addition, 96,297 Orange County children and teens attended youth programs. With children's materials representing over 40 percent of total circulation, it is a true reflection of OCPL's success in serving the needs of Orange County's children.

Aliso Viejo Branch Library
1 Journey, Aliso Viejo, California 92656

Opened	January 31, 1998
First Branch Librarian	Carin Sung
2000 Population	40,166 (Aliso Viejo)
1990 Population	2,410,556 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	103,685
Square Footage in 2001	20,400



Aliso Viejo Branch Library

The Aliso Viejo Branch Library has the fortuitous address of 1 Journey in the County's newest city, Aliso Viejo, incorporated July 1, 2001, and a journey is what it has been for the Library as well as its new community. The Library boasts a spacious, modern building that receives compliments from everyone who visits.

A joint project of the Mission Viejo Company, and the County of Orange, the facility boasts several unique features. Green granite detailing on the building's exterior continues inside on countertops; whimsical aluminum human-shaped cutout light holders balance on wires above the circulation desk; and a fireplace is surrounded by comfortable chairs in the periodicals area. Also featured are windows with sweeping views, light-pink walls, Mission-style furniture, a covered atrium, and open patios with umbrellas shading round tables.

The building conveys a sense of welcome and good humor, as well as old-fashioned comfort, combined with the streamlined utility of twenty-first century technology.

The architects designed the signature clock tower, named Friendship Tower in an opening-day contest. It is an old-fashioned round-faced clock in a shiny, modern granite-and-metalwork frame in keeping with the spirit of the Library.

The Friends of Aliso Viejo Library, under the direction of its first president, Marshall Schlom, were organized and active well before the Library was built.

Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, founder of Soka University of America, which opened in the City of Aliso Viejo in September, 2001, contributed \$50,000 to enhance the Library's collection.

In preparation for opening day, staff from Aliso Viejo and other OCPL branch libraries, combined with loyal local volunteers, organized the opening-day collection of 80,000 items. A "bucket-brigade" shelved books and the rhythm of the work inspired some to break into song.

On opening day, David Hanna, proprietor of Pages Café, the building's first food concession, provided free espresso to grand opening attendees, and the National Charity League baked cookies for all to enjoy. A musical quartet played near the fireplace throughout the day.

During the grand opening, the Library's community room was filled to capacity with eager new patrons, and in spite of rain, an overflow crowd stood patiently in the atrium in order to see and hear and feel themselves a part of the historic occasion.

The Library's grand opening and first years will long be remembered by the staff, patrons, and friends of the Aliso Viejo Library.

Brea Branch Library

One Civic Center Circle, Brea, California 92621

Opened	October 11, 1921
Current Location	September 25, 1981
First Branch Librarian	Anna McVeigh
2000 Population	35,410 (Brea)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	80,000
Square Footage in 2001	10,880



Brea Branch Library

"Can you tell me where the tar pits are located?" Although 40 miles away from the famous La Brea tar pits of Los Angeles, librarians at Brea Library are still called upon to explain that Brea is in Orange County and has no tar pits, fossils or the like. The confusion rests in the name, with Brea meaning "tar" or "asphalt" in Spanish. It is actually an apt name, for the city began as an oil boomtown in the 1890's.

Today, there are few reminders of that era; only a few tall oil derricks remain on the northern hillsides. A Vera Cross painting of the old hillside oil fields hangs in the lobby near the wood model of an oil derrick by H.N. Frog-Wincel. Otherwise, the Brea Library shows little trace of its rowdy oil-town beginnings.

Brea Library was the first of the original eight branches to open in 1921. Brea PTA groups and the Study Club, represented by Mrs. Charles Harvey, petitioned the Orange County Board of Supervisors to establish the county library system and organized Brea support. The Board approved the formation of the Orange County Free Library and let the Brea Branch open first in recognition of efforts by the organizations and residents of Brea.

The first branch was at 104 South Pomona (Brea Blvd.) During 1921/1922, Brea Library had 521 patrons reading 7,000 books. In 1929, Miss Kathryn Burke was appointed librarian, and has the distinction of having been Brea's branch librarian for 27 years until her retirement in 1956.

In 1962 the Library moved to the Brea Heights Shopping Center (642 So. Brea Blvd.). Former staff recall the old storefront with its cigar box that held overdue fine money, and an era when they checked out sewing patterns as well as books.

Today Brea Library resides in the Brea Civic and Cultural Center, a four-acre site housing numerous community organizations.

Visitors to the Library have included Dr. Thomas Noguchi, former L. A. County Coroner, who visited in 1984 to speak about his book, Coroner. That year the fencing team from CSU, Fullerton gave a live fencing demonstration in honor of the 1984 Olympics. The movie Moving Violations, starring Sally Kellerman and James Keach, was filmed partly in the Civic Center with cast and crew spending time in the Library between filming.

Students from a Whittier chiropractic school used the Library to study a human skeleton which generated considerable attention, and a group of nurses once used the meeting room to practice taking blood, but did not get any volunteers from library staff. Seeing Eye Dogs have also been brought to the Library to "study," while getting used to public places and people.

As Brea has grown and changed, so too has its library. Today the Brea Branch serves local Spanish-speaking residents, a growing number of Chinese-speaking patrons and new Russian immigrants. Although the city's beginnings as an oil boomtown are barely visible, Brea's strong sense of community has been a constant theme throughout its history.

Chapman Branch Library

9182 Chapman Avenue, Garden Grove, California 92641

Opened	January 14, 1964
First Branch Librarian	Harriet Scheldrup
2000 Population	165,196 (Garden Grove)
1960 Population	84,238 (Garden Grove)
Total Resources in 2001	62,377
Square Footage in 2001	5,279



Chapman Branch Library

The Chapman Avenue Branch Library is one of three Orange County Public Library branches serving the citizens of Garden Grove. The branch was originally planned to be a part of the shopping center at Chapman and Brookhurst Avenues, but due to cost considerations, the decision was made to build the Library on the northeast edge of the Marie L. Hare Junior High School grounds.

The Chapman and West Garden Grove branches were approved and constructed simultaneously with the same crew working on both branches, traveling between the two facilities. Both Libraries opened January 14, 1964.

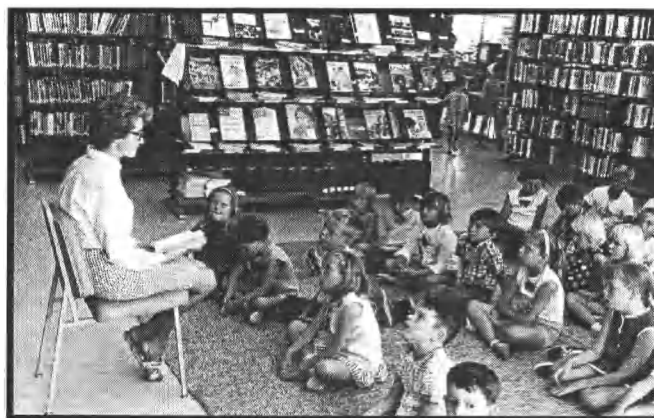
The Chapman Branch had the distinction of being the first library with a professional children's librarian, Dorothy Wood. In 1965, Ms. Wood became Branch Manager, working until 1995 when she transferred to the Cypress Branch Library. In 2000, Carol Ann Helsel, former Children's Librarian at Chapman Library from 1965 to 1995, became Branch Manager.

For 22 summers the children of the Chapman Branch were entertained by the "The Chapman Players," a local group of students from the 7th grade and up, who presented an annual melodrama. The first melodrama in 1973 was "Girl of the Gold Mine," and the 22nd melodrama, presented in 1994, was a reprise of "Girl of the Gold Mine." That year the production was filmed by Garden Grove's Channel 3 Television, and can still be viewed in 2001.

Because of Dorothy Woods' knowledge and interest in music, contributors from the Woman's Civic Club of Garden Grove and the Garden Grove Friends of the Library started and sustained the Chapman Branch Library's music collection until 1993.

For space considerations, in 1994 these music resources were transferred to the Cypress Library.

Current special collections at the Chapman Branch Library include resources in Vietnamese and Spanish.

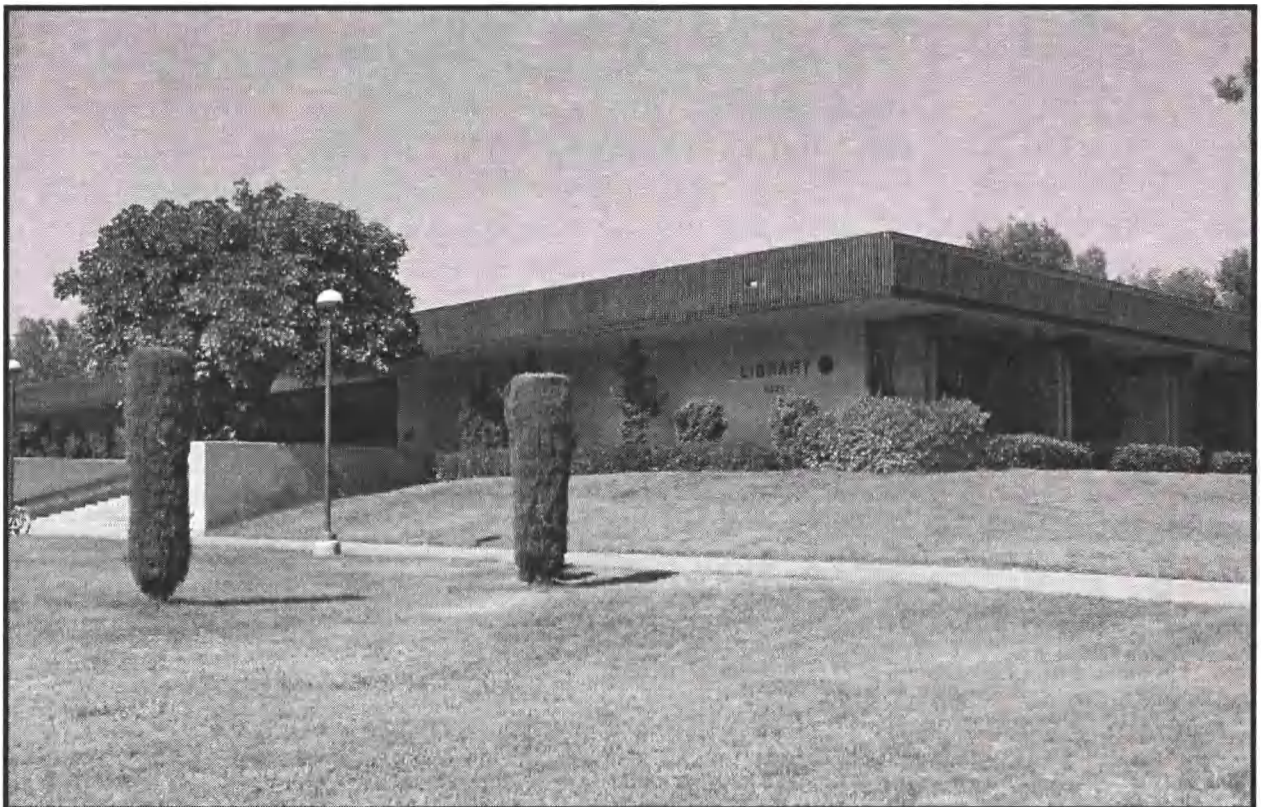


Chapman Branch Library Storytime with Carol Ann Helsel, 1968.

Cypress Branch Library

5331 Orange Avenue, Cypress, California 90630

Opened	July 7, 1933
Current Location	September 23, 1976
First Branch Librarian	Clara King
2000 Population	46,229 (Cypress)
1930 Population	118,674 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	118,630
Square Footage in 2001	15,000



Cypress Branch Library

One day, a Cypress third grader told the children's librarian that he wanted to meet the lady who invented Cypress. She took him into the Branch Manager's office and introduced him to Christine Swain.

Christine Swain, long-time Cypress resident involved in the city's development from its early days, was also Cypress Branch Librarian. She guided the Branch Library from a 600-square-foot storefront building near the Southern Pacific Railroad track, to the modern-day facility at the Cypress Civic Center.

Christine Swain, who retired from the Orange County Public Library in 1984, passed away in January, 2000.

While Cypress library service began as early as December 6, 1921 (housed in a real estate office), today's library has evolved. In 1994, Chapman Library's music collection was moved to the Cypress Branch, and through a \$67,000 California State Library Grant awarded in 1999/2000, the collection was cataloged, preserved, and made accessible to patrons. Today, on average, the Library fills 100 music request a month from OCPL's 27 branches, and 5 to 20 per month from other libraries in Orange and San Diego Counties, and more.

Black & White Silent Films are housed at the Cypress Branch. About 100 of the Library's 123 titles were donated by local patron I.G. Edmonds. A large contributor to the Library's silent auction fundraiser held each month, Edmonds brings favorite books and memorabilia to raise financial support for the Library. The Cypress Branch Library is grateful to have patrons like Mr. Edmonds.

The Cypress Library has the distinction of having the local Woman's Club, Library Division, rather than a Friends of the Library group. The Woman's Club is active in raising funds to expand the Cypress Library's collections and enrich programming.

***The Children's Fountain,
a gift from the city of
Cypress, was dedicated
in June, 2000.***



Dana Point Branch Library

33841 Niguel Road, Dana Point, California 92629

Opened	October 1, 1938
Current Location	July 6, 1977
First Branch Librarian	Laura Louise Russell
2000 Population	35,110 (Dana Point)
1930 Population	118,674 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	79,282
Square Footage in 2001	12,114



Dana Point Branch Library

In a way, the Dana Point Library can be compared to the children's book The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton. The story tells of a little house built in a country location with trees and fields around it. Over the years it became surrounded by skyscrapers, automobiles, and a noisy subway. A short history of the Dana Point Library shows similarities to this story.

The Dana Point Library (as it was named until 1977) began operation in the post office on Pacific Coast Highway on October 1, 1938, serving the unincorporated community of Dana Point and adjoining areas. Later, the Library would be called Dana Niguel from 1977 to 1998, changing back to its original name in 1998.

After 38 years and two branch moves, on April 2, 1976, the modern-day library celebrated its groundbreaking. The building, designed with skylights to reduce need for artificial lighting, is also the only branch in Orange County to use earth berms to improve insulation. On opening day, celebrated July 6, 1977, the collection offered 57,000 volumes. "Special equipment" boasted of that day included a VCR monitor, manual typewriters, and "Apple IIe" computers for public use.

The Friends of Dana Point Library was organized in 1979. First president Cynthia Baugh recruited 20 original members. Their goal was to strengthen community support for the Library and raise funds for library operations. Today there are over 500 members in the group and recent president Forrest Owen was awarded a recognition in 2001 from OCPL for his service to the Library.

The city of Dana Point is unique in many ways, and one of the few cities named for an author. In 1884, Richard Henry Dana, who penned Two Years Before the Mast, gave the city his name. With a beautiful harbor and active marine activities, the Dana Point Branch offers a special collection of nautical and marine books. Newer resources in Spanish and French serve a growing, changing population.

People visiting Dana Point Library can expect to find an active children's area, a special collection for young adults, books, periodicals and movies in Spanish, Internet access, and most importantly, a friendly and knowledgeable staff.

Today, the Dana Point Branch Library, like The Little House, is surrounded by growth and development. There are two large hotels nearby, and homes in all directions. But with the Pacific Ocean only a short stroll away, the Library itself will not suffer as the little house did. The ocean breezes and the noise of the crows on the roof make the Library's atmosphere a delight.

Fountain Valley Branch Library

17635 Los Alamos, Fountain Valley, California 92708

Opened	January 23, 1965
Current Location	September 27, 1991
First Branch Librarian	Dorise Jesko
2000 Population	54,978 (Fountain Valley)
1960 Population	703,925 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	99,972
Square Footage in 2001	14,443



Fountain Valley Branch Library

Originally part of the 1784 Las Bolsas Land Grant, in the mid-1800's the Fountain Valley area was covered with willows and tule pads, while the Santa Ana River meandered through the valley. It was called "Gospel Swamps," then "Talbert," and finally, "Fountain Valley" for the many artesian wells. Library service was provided as early as 1921 at the Talbert School, and bookmobiles visited between 1959-1964.

Incorporated in 1957, by January 1965 Fountain Valley dedicated the first two buildings in its civic center, City Hall and the Library. The 5,200 square foot library opened with 13,575 volumes

The Library's service area had a patron base of 3,600 in the early 1920s. After three expansions, the current library celebrated its groundbreaking on November 5, 1988 and its dedication on September 27, 1991, opening with 58,000 items.

The Library's front appears as a sculptural composition of curvilinear gray concrete illuminated with natural light under high clerestory windows. At night, the building's front façade appears like a friendly blue whale, while from the air, the building's sawtooth plan fans out across its site.

Inside the branch, colorful artwork, plants, and flower arrangements contribute to an inviting ambiance. Near the lobby is a richly carved wood and bronze engraved donor recognition plaque in the shape of a tree. Designed by sculptor Sanford Werfel of New Jersey in memory of children's librarian, David Christy, each bronzed leaf honors a patron, family, business, or community group that has contributed to the Library.

Purchased with Friends' donations, the Library has a sculpture created by Erwin Binder, "The Secret," which stands in the outdoor patio's reflecting pool to honor an early Fountain Valley librarian, Ronald S. Rice.

From the beginning, the Fountain Valley Branch has been supported by a very active Friends group, which still includes charter members. Each year, through its onsite bookstore and other events, the Friends raise thousands of dollars to expand the library's collections and enrich programming. They provide the extras that make the Fountain Valley Branch so special. Since 1995, a dedicated group of library volunteers have contributed over 14,000 hours of service to the branch.

In 2001, both the city and the Library present a strikingly different picture from their beginnings. Fountain Valley continues to merit its motto as "a nice place to live," and the Library mirrors the changing community. Today's resources include an expanding foreign language section, and circulation reached nearly 350,000 in 2000.

A walk into the Fountain Valley Library today will show a diverse crowd of patrons enthusiastically enjoying the Internet, getting reference assistance, reading, attending programs, browsing the bookstore, and enjoying the patio.

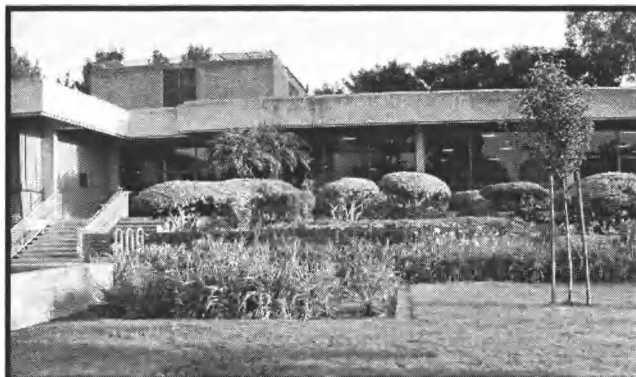
Garden Grove Regional Library

11200 Stanford Avenue, Garden Grove, California, 92640

Opened	October 25, 1921
Current Location	November 22, 1969
First Branch Librarian	Pearl Haskins
2000 Population	165,196 (Garden Grove)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	176,732
Square Footage in 2001	21,484



Garden Grove Library, 1957.



Garden Grove Regional Library, Aug., 2001.

Garden Grove Regional Library

From *The City of Garden Grove: The First Twenty Years, 1956-1976*, as told by Leroy L. Doig, former Garden Grove educator and council member, library service to Garden Grove began in 1919 when the Woman's Club offered a "book circulating project." The county library began service to Garden Grove in 1921.

A large flood in 1952 at the Garden Grove Chamber of Commerce, which housed the library at the time, caused substantial damage to materials, so a building was leased from William Noble ("the ideal landlord") at 12651 Euclid Avenue. The new Garden Grove Library opened April 18, 1952, and in 1953, the library had its first telephone line installed.

Lillian Neal, children's librarian for 17 years, recalls storytimes at the library in the 1950's at the YMCA Building at Garden Grove Blvd. and Walnut Street. She also remembers a young Billy Pannier riding his horse to the library and tying it to an orange tree. Pannier would exchange his sack of books and ride off to his home on Chapman Avenue. In addition, the teen volunteers had a tradition of throwing Mrs. Neal into a swimming pool at the annual summer party, and notably, future comedian Steve Martin attended storytimes.

After the opening of two new small libraries in Garden Grove in 1964, a large central library was approved. The Civic Center Library broke ground on June 12, 1968. Today, a fountain in front of the Library honors former Mayor George Honold who worked tirelessly for the library cause.

The dedication ceremony for the Civic Center location of the Garden Grove Library was held November 22, 1969. Still the largest library in the system, the branch was the shining jewel of the city. Mayor pro-tem Kathryn Barr read congratulatory wires from President Nixon and Governor Reagan, and presented a flag that had flown over the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. from Congressman Richard T. Hanna. Hanna wisely advised, "We can govern ourselves if we can educate ourselves. Education is too important to leave to the schools. We must continue on our own. This library provides a great instrument for learning."

In 1995, library staff diligently protected Mallard ducklings that were living in front of the library. Due to a law forbidding anyone to touch the nest, a swimming pool and daily food were brought to the babies by staff members, and the little ducklings were deftly maneuvered to the lake when they gained strength.

Today, the Garden Grove Regional Library is a Federal and State Government Publications Depository and includes resources in Korean language books, Spanish titles and Native American culture and history. Eighty years of knowledge and hard work provided by staff, volunteers, and Friends of the Library in sustaining the Garden Grove Regional Library has created a city jewel that endures today.

Heritage Park Regional Library

14361 Yale Avenue, Irvine, California, 92604

Opened	June 3, 1988
First Branch Librarian	Barbara Brook
2000 Population	143,072 (Irvine)
1980 Population	62,134 (Irvine)
Total Resources in 2001	145,209
Square Footage in 2001	18,000



Heritage Park Regional Library

Heritage Park Regional Library opened on June 6, 1988, as the County's third Regional Library and the second public library within Irvine. Barbara Brook has been the Heritage Park Regional Librarian from the library's inception to the present day. The 18,000 square foot library opened with 110,000 volumes.

At the opening, Heritage Park Library was a beneficiary of the "Irvine Art in Public Places" program and Mark Lere was commissioned to create a three-part sculpture which now graces the entrance to the library. It includes a tile time line, a stone chair and a sculpture 12 feet high.

The Library joins Heritage Park, which includes an aquatic and fine arts center, high school, day care center and fire station. Located within a major financial center of Southern California, the library is noted for its strong business collection and people come from a 35-mile radius to use the special services of this branch.

The nearby University of California, Irvine and other local schools have a reputation for excellence, catering to a diverse, educated and professional population. Irvine citizens include people from many Asian countries as well as new residents from the Near East, Russia and South Africa.

The Friends of the Library maintain an increasingly profitable bookstore on the premises. Bookstore proceeds are given to the Library on a monthly basis. These funds have enabled the library to buy additional technical equipment, personal computers, software, patio furniture, extra children's programs and other resources over the years.

In 1992 the Friends of the Library sponsored a literary contest to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the City of Irvine. The winner's essay was published by the Friends and sold in the bookstore.

In 1990-1991, library headquarters staff used the Heritage Park Regional Library as its transition facility to its new administrative offices. The County Librarian, John Adams, and headquarters staff moved into the Library using every available space for the better part of a year. This was a time of good-natured improvisation, and at one point, John Adams even shared his office with helium balloons stored for a children's program.

In 1995, the Orange County bankruptcy caused the City of Irvine to consider establishing an independent city library. In 1996, the City Council decided that their best interests would be served by remaining within OCPL.

Heritage Park Regional Library is now undergoing a building expansion that will include a teen area along with more books, computer workstations and an expanded staff work area.

La Habra Branch Library

221 E. La Habra Boulevard, La Habra, California, 90631

Opened	November 8, 1921
Current Location	December 1, 1966
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Frederick B. Drake
2000 Population	58,974 (La Habra)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	95,762
Square Footage in 2001	15,000



La Habra Branch Library

In 1919, while awaiting the creation of a county library system, La Habra residents Mr. and Mrs. Hilbert opened a small library in the music room of Hilbert Pharmacy on the southeast corner of what is now Euclid and La Habra Blvd. Along with lending books, the Hilberts also sold records, which patrons could conveniently play on the Victrola located therein.

Under the auspices of the Women's Club, the first library opened in the back room of the Citizen's Commercial and Savings Bank to serve a population of 750. The collection had 50 books, in equal numbers for adults and children, and half checked out on opening day. Mrs. Drake's husband built the first bookcase from a dry goods box.

In 1922, the La Casita tamale restaurant on Central Avenue was bought through fundraising by the Woman's Club, P.T.A., Farm Bureau, and Chamber of Commerce. The land rented for \$5 per month from La Habra pioneer John Launer. On March 8, Mrs. Drake and Anna Garretson loaded the collection of 250 books and one bookcase onto a truck, thanked the bank, and moved to their new quarters. Garretson became the Library's custodian (and janitor) and each of the town's community organizations took turns paying her \$10 monthly salary. By the end of 1922, the County began paying her salary.

Launer, an active supporter, planted flowers, built the back steps, and persuaded the Chamber to pay \$5 towards monthly rent, service charges and insurance. Photos of this first building are displayed in the Library.

In 1937, the Library moved to the Civic Center. Sophia Kruse was librarian from 1937 to 1951. During her two-week summer vacations, she had frequent patron Ruth Anne McBride run the Library. In a letter dated December, 1999, McBride wrote "My career as a librarian was sullied one summer when, after having told Sophie I would work for her, I was suddenly invited to work at the YMCA camp at Osceola in the San Bernardino Mountains. (I was) a sophomore at Fullerton (High School) that year. Sophie had already left on vacation, and I more or less bullied another lady into taking over the remainder of my job. When she returned and discovered this, Sophie was furious, but luckily she forgave me and we were friends for many more years until her untimely death."

A new building, located near the former library, opened in 1966 and was expanded in 1982-83. Coincidentally, during construction the next move was back to a bank. Then-Branch Manager Teri Garza recalls the magazine lounge was next to the bank vault and the teller counter was the circulation desk. Barbara Christian, a 30-year librarian, relates an unexpected bonus during the expansion of standing on the new balcony to watch the 1984 Olympic torch being carried down La Habra Boulevard.

Today the Library has an active Friends group running the only bookstore in town, the largest Spanish language collection in OCPL, and bilingual staff. Traditions and buildings may change, but the support of the community provided since the founding ladies of the Library continues today.

La Palma Branch Library

7842 Walker Street, La Palma, California, 90623

Opened	September 27, 1969
First Branch Librarian	Lionel Ascher
2000 Population	15,408 (La Palma)
1960 Population	703,925 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	68,028
Square Footage in 2001	6,300



La Palma Branch Library

La Palma Branch Library opened in September, 1969, with 10,000 books. According to an October edition of the *News-Enterprise*, it was named "Orange County's most beautiful library."

The library was built adjacent to a large dairy farm, a remnant from the days that the city had been named Dairyland. Recollections from branch staff told of cows smudging the library's windows with their noses. Others remember the cows' odors, but fortunately, the dairy was moved to Chino in 1970.

During the winter of 1969 staff was shivering when temperatures inside the library dropped to 53 degrees. An expert assured the staff that everything was in working order, and it was later discovered that the gas pipes had never been installed in the library.

In June of 1971, the Friends of the Library was officially formed, and has provided 30 years of strong support.

In the mid 1980's volunteer Mrs. Shizuko Goetzka remembers reading in a Japanese paper that La Palma Library had a collection of Japanese books. She found that the library had only a shelf or so of books so she asked everyone she met if they had any Japanese books to donate. The collection grew from the first shelf of books to a collection of over 10,000 books and paperbacks and became the main Japanese collection for the Orange County Library System. Mrs. Goetzka remembers how grateful people were to have Japanese books to read since at that time there were few if any Japanese bookstores in Orange County. People would come from as far away as San Diego to take out books. Some of those same patrons continued to come to the Library twenty years later.

Also in the mid 1980's, Renee Welling, manager at the time, recalls a young boy who loved to hide in the Library. One night she got a call to let a boy out of the building, as he had called his father and said that he was locked in the closed library and could not get out.

October 1, 1987 at 7:42 am, the Whittier Narrows Earthquake struck with a magnitude of 5.9. The ceiling above the reference desk fell along with some electrical wires, and fortunately, staff had not yet arrived for their morning shift. It took the staff a week to reshelve all of the books that had fallen.

After the Orange County bankruptcy of 1995, the Library was just two days per week, until the county became more financially stable. Cheryl Nakaji, who was manager at the time, called La Palma Branch, "The little library that wouldn't close."

La Palma Branch Library responds to the community's needs by adding foreign language books in Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Spanish. A language learning center, career and new book area was added in 1999, and the Library added word processors along with Internet workstations.

Laguna Niguel Branch Library

30341 Crown Valley Parkway, Laguna Niguel, California, 92677

Opened	December 5, 1987
First Branch Librarian	Renee Sarno Welling
2000 Population	61,891 (Laguna Niguel)
1980 Population	1,932,709 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	81,923
Square Footage in 2001	10,500



Laguna Niguel Branch Library

"Pink and playful." The Laguna Niguel Branch Library (formerly the Crown Valley Branch Library) is a happy conglomerate of triangular, rectangular and arched shapes, like a handful of geometrically varied blocks artfully arranged.

In 1987 Bernie Smith, local resident, newspaper columnist, and 15-year producer of TV's "You Bet Your Life" quiz show, likened it to something out of the Land of Oz, while County Library staff compared it to Disney's "Small World."

Once the county painted it peach on the upper two-thirds, and salmon pink on the lower third, aluminum strips were added down the sides of some of the angles. To counter the controversial press during construction of the library with its unique color scheme, then-Branch Manager Renee Sarno and her staff came up with a public relations campaign titled "Sneak-a-peek." With the foyer open and the remaining parts of the building roped off, people could peek in to see what their new library was going to look like, and at the same time, could register for a library card. The campaign was a success; nearly all citizens were won over after seeing the big picture first-hand.

Inside the Library the feeling is warm and serene, utilizing a color palette that includes muted wine berry, lavender and soft peach, with touches of pale aquamarine. The 45-degree angles in the skylights, as well as the placement of windows, are practical as well as whimsical. The large central skylight floods the Library with natural daylight, and the floor plan is open, creating a feeling of grand spaciousness.

In 1987 the Library opened with 50,000 books, one personal computer, and audio tapes which were immediately popular with Laguna Niguel's daily commuters. The Library opened with more than 150 taped books, including novels, technical manuals and travel tomes. Today, books recorded on CD in a variety of subjects are gaining in popularity.

The community of Laguna Niguel has been actively supportive of the Library over the past 14 years. After the Orange County bankruptcy, the Friends of the Library worked to restore service and keep the collection current. In 1995 the Friends garnered support from the City Council, which resulted in an initial grant of \$30,000. The City of Laguna Niguel has renewed that grant every year since, as the Friends and branch librarians work in tandem to create formal proposals annually for the use of the grant funding. Magazine subscriptions have been restored, reference materials are kept current, Summer Reading Programs for children and teens have been supplemented, and programs for all ages have been presented.

After being repainted in 1997, the Library now blends with the terra-cotta pinks of the Spanish and Mediterranean architecture prominent throughout the Laguna Niguel community—so the Library was ahead of its time!

Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Branch Library

12700 Montecito Road, Seal Beach, California, 90740

Opened	January 1, 1935
Current Location	May 5, 1962
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Grace Green
2000 Population	11,536 (Los Alamitos); 10,298 (Rossmoor)
1930 Population	118,674 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	83,947
Square Footage in 2001	10,488



Los Alamitos/Rossmoor Branch Library

County Library service was first offered in Los Alamitos as early as 1921 from the principal's office of the old Laurel School located in the center of town. An official Los Alamitos Branch was established in the school in January, 1935, with Mrs. Grace Green as the first librarian.

The community grew rapidly during the 1930's and 40's, especially after the U. S. Naval Air Station moved to Los Alamitos from Long Beach in 1941, bringing many Navy families. That year, the Library moved across the street to a new store next to the Post Office where it stayed until 1950, when it moved into the new Post Office building, which was enlarged and remodeled in 1956.

In April, 1962 the Library moved to its current home in the Rossmoor Shopping Center, changing its name to the Los Alamitos Rossmoor Branch. The Library was fully supported by the community and opened with lounge furniture donated by the Rossmoor Jewish Men's Club, periodical covers and art books supplied by the Rossmoor Woman's Club, floor pads for the children's section from the Rossmoor Brownies and a \$25 donation toward a bike rack by a local Cub Scout troop. In 1967 the shopping center was annexed by the city of Seal Beach, so the Library actually resides in Seal Beach.

Originally a 5,000-square-foot building, the Library was expanded in 1978 to 10,088-square-feet with a collection of 51,000 volumes. In July, 1985 a fire in the book-drop started by some wayward fireworks caused considerable damage to the Library's interior. During repairs the building was remodeled with added circulation and reference desks, and reopened in November, 1985.

Today the Library offers a large genealogy collection inherited from the Leisure World Branch in 1995 when they left the County Library system, and is the first County branch to offer Internet access from all computer workstations.

Gladys Lorenzo, Branch Manager from 1967 to 1981, credits Children's Librarian Joyce Woerner with putting the branch on the map during this time with her creative programming. During the gas crisis of the 1970's Woerner took magazines, bestsellers and library card applications to the nearby gas station for customers waiting in line. Gas customers could check out books from the pump, or just browse magazines.

Woerner also ran a successful "Adopt a Pet" program for two summers by gathering pets from local classrooms and lending them out for a week at a time. Animals available included rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters and a chameleon. Woerner also ran a successful guppy for books program; each time a child read 10 books and brought a jar and permission slip from their parent, she would reward them with a guppy. Eventually she ran out of guppies and had to resort to IOU's until more eggs hatched. This program continued for months until the Library closed for its expansion.

The Friends of the Los Alamitos Rossmoor Library organized in 1961, and are still actively supporting the Library today.

Mesa Verde Branch Library

2969 Mesa Verde Drive, Costa Mesa, California, 92626

Opened	November 1, 1965
First Branch Librarian	Miss Esther Burch
2000 Population	108,724 (Costa Mesa)
1960 Population	37,550 (Costa Mesa)
Total Resources in 2001	74,301
Square Footage in 2001	6,458



Mesa Verde Branch Library

The Mesa Verde Branch Library opened with a dedication ceremony at the Mesa Verde Country Club, with Robert Kirsch of the "Los Angeles Times" serving as speaker. During the first months of operation, circulation reached over 12,000 books per month, which is pretty remarkable considering that the opening day collection was just 11,500 items.

As a neighborhood library, Mesa Verde is in a unique position. Patrons who grew up in the neighborhood using the Library bring their children in, just as their parents brought them in. This multi-generational stability is a rarity in mobile southern California, but common in Mesa Verde. Often long-time neighbors meet and greet each other in the Library, catching up on the past and present.

In 1987 the Library was refurbished, with new circulation and reference desks added, along with new carpeting. The furniture was upholstered in 2000, and the entire building repainted in 2001. A new roof was installed after the torrential rains of El Nino caused the loss of numerous resources in the Reference collection.

Although lacking a community room, the Mesa Verde Library has always offered public programs. Story hours are held year-round in the primary room, and during the summer months large-scale children's programs are held outside on the lawn under the Library's large trees. The Library also boasts tri-level reading areas.

Mesa Verde Library serves an active and well-educated clientele, with many recent immigrants. The Spanish and Vietnamese language books are very popular, as are large print and audio books. The Library is frequented by all ages, from the very young to senior citizens, and many children who took part in the Summer Reading Programs as youngsters have become volunteers in the program as teenagers, helping other youngsters participate as well. The Library also features an active program for adult volunteers who perform an array of support tasks all year long.

An active author program was begun at Mesa Verde in the early 1990's. When it grew too large for the facility, it moved to the South Coast Plaza Shopping Plaza, and each February the Mesa Verde Branch Library assists in hosting author visits to all the schools in Costa Mesa.

The Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries serve as a support group for both Costa Mesa area libraries, which includes the Costa Mesa Branch. The group, first established in 1959 by Lucille Pinkley and Mrs. John Smith, is now a non-profit organization that raises money to support programs for both libraries. The Friends have provided new equipment, summer reading program support, new books, videos and tapes, and many extras for many years, providing for a new generation of library patrons.

Orangewood Children's Home
(Open to residents only)

Opened	November 30, 1990
First Branch Librarian	Pam Carlson
2000 Population	2,846,289 (Orange County)
1990 Population	2,410,556 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	6,924
Square Footage in 2001	1,079

Orangewood Children's Home

In 1989, OCPL was awarded a grant by the California Library Services and Construction Act to establish a library program at Orangewood, Orange County's primary intake facility for abused, neglected, and abandoned children. The program, named Library Stars, was overseen by Grant Director Pam Carlson under the supervision of OCPL's Children's Services Coordinator Lynn Eisenhut. Emily Jackson served as Programs Administrator and grant writer.

Orangewood Children's Home was established in its present location in 1985. The home has attractive Spanish-style cottages designed and decorated for specific age groups. Since it lacks the stereotypical look of a shelter, it avoids an institutional appearance. The facility includes a pool, gymnasium, and on-site school for grades K-12.

The first year, Carlson conducted storytimes, activities, and visits from the on-site school. During the grant year, OCPL's librarians were trained to present programs at Orangewood, with the original plan having them continue providing weekly programming after the grant funding ended. The grant was targeted to ages 6 to 8, but soon grew to include all ages, teaching children to use library resources so they would be able to do so when released back into the community.

At the end of the grant year, OCPL continued to fund the program with Pam Carlson continuing as librarian until May, 2000. Geany Crabb currently serves as Orangewood's Librarian.

In 1998, La Casa, the Orangewood Children's Auxiliary, provided funding for a complete library renovation, which was finished in the spring of 1999. The project was the brainchild of La Casa's then-president Monica Penninger, director of the Santa Fe Springs Library. New flooring, lighting, locking cabinets, shelving, tables, and reupholstered chairs were provided, and two new computers were donated. Shelving was donated and installed by the Burt C. Gentle Company, and the collection was developed from a combination of purchased, reassigned, and donated books. Staff referred to the facility as a "real" library for the first time, and final cost topped \$50,000.

Over the years presentations on this unique library facility have been given at the California and American Library Associations' annual conferences. Articles on Orangewood's Library have also been published by "School Library Journal," "VOYA" and "Journal of Youth Services."

Rancho Santa Margarita Branch Library

30902 La Promesa, Rancho Santa Margarita, California, 92688

Opened	November 29, 1994
First Branch Librarian	Diane Alter
2000 Population	47,214 (Rancho Santa Margarita)
1990 Population	2,410,556 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	116,073
Square Footage in 2001	16,300



Rancho Santa Margarita Branch Library

Rancho Santa Margarita Branch Library opened its doors November 29, 1994 as a joint project of the County and a local developer, The Santa Margarita Company, to serve the unincorporated town of Rancho Santa Margarita and the surrounding canyon communities. The Library was the first in Orange County to use Mello Roos funding for its construction, and it opened for business four months ahead of schedule, thanks to a volunteer force of over 150 community members who responded to the appeal for help from Diane Alter, the first branch librarian.

The interior of the 16,300-square foot Spanish-style facility is bathed in natural light from rows of clerestory windows. Special features include a magazine lounge with ceramic-tile fireplace, a Quiet Room that seats 12, a children's storytime terrace, a community room seating 100, and a Friends' of the Library used bookstore.

When it opened in 1994, the Library was a showcase for new energy-saving state-of-the-art construction, including remote-controlled windows, bathroom fixtures that operate on sensors, and doors that lock electronically (except one New Year's Eve, which found staff member Santa Murphy toasting the new year at the Library while waiting for a locksmith after hours).

The current collection includes books, videos, CDs, audio books and pamphlets. Some of the special collections include business reference, career center, readers for children, a parent's shelf and young adult collection. Internet stations are available in the adult and children's areas.

The Friends of the Rancho Santa Margarita Library support library programs for children, teens and adults, funded by proceeds from the sale of used books. In response to an ever-growing demand for space, in 2001, the Friends financed additional stack shelving for the collection. Donations from local businesses and service organizations have also added to the funds available for special programs and equipment.

For several years the library stood alone, surrounded by empty lots and vulnerable to dust storms prompted by Santa Ana winds swirling down Saddleback Peak onto undeveloped land. Now the Library finds itself surrounded by construction on all sides, and will soon be at the center of a whole complex of new shops, restaurants, park space and civic buildings.

Located within walking distance of preschools, elementary and middle schools, as well as a high school, the Library is a popular gathering place for students of all ages. Heavily used by a community that has doubled in population since its opening, Rancho Santa Margarita Library continues to meet new challenges as it serves the first new Orange County city of the millennium.

San Clemente Branch Library

242 Avenida Del Mar, San Clemente, California, 92672

Opened	May 22, 1928
Current Location	June 7, 1982
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Loral H. Caskey
2000 Population	49,936 (San Clemente)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	85,278
Square Footage in 2001	10,000



San Clemente Branch Library

The San Clemente Branch of the Orange County Library was established in 1928, the same year the City of San Clemente was incorporated, and just three years after founder Ole Hanson started building houses in the new development he envisioned as a "Spanish Village by the Sea." He named his colony after San Clemente Island.

The branch library was located in the butler's pantry in the then-new community clubhouse. Mrs. Loral Caskey, who wrote for the local newspaper, "El Heraldo de San Clemente," was the first librarian, and her husband served as assistant editor of the newspaper.

Before the branch opened, in 1927 a local shop owner had tried to deal with the "dearth of literature" in the village by establishing a rental book collection with a membership fee of 25 cents and rental fees of two cents per day. A list of all sixty titles in that collection was printed on the front page of "El Heraldo."

The Library grew gradually and it was not until 1940 that it was moved to larger quarters on the clubhouse's enclosed veranda. The population and the demand for library services grew rapidly throughout the 1950s. The Library was moved to a larger building in May, 1951, and again in October, 1956. In 1963, librarian Winifred Draddy reported that it was the fourth time the Library had been moved or enlarged since she joined the staff in 1942. By this time, San Clemente was also served by a County Bookmobile.

In 1969, President Richard Nixon bought a house at the southern tip of San Clemente which became the Western White House. When he left office in 1974, he retired to San Clemente. Candy Haggard, the Library's branch manager from December, 1978 until 1990 (and who later became the city's mayor), reported in her first annual report that "perhaps surprisingly, the Nixons have little effect on the city of San Clemente." But a veteran staff member recalls that television journalist Diane Sawyer, who came to help Nixon with his memoirs, used the San Clemente Branch Library often.

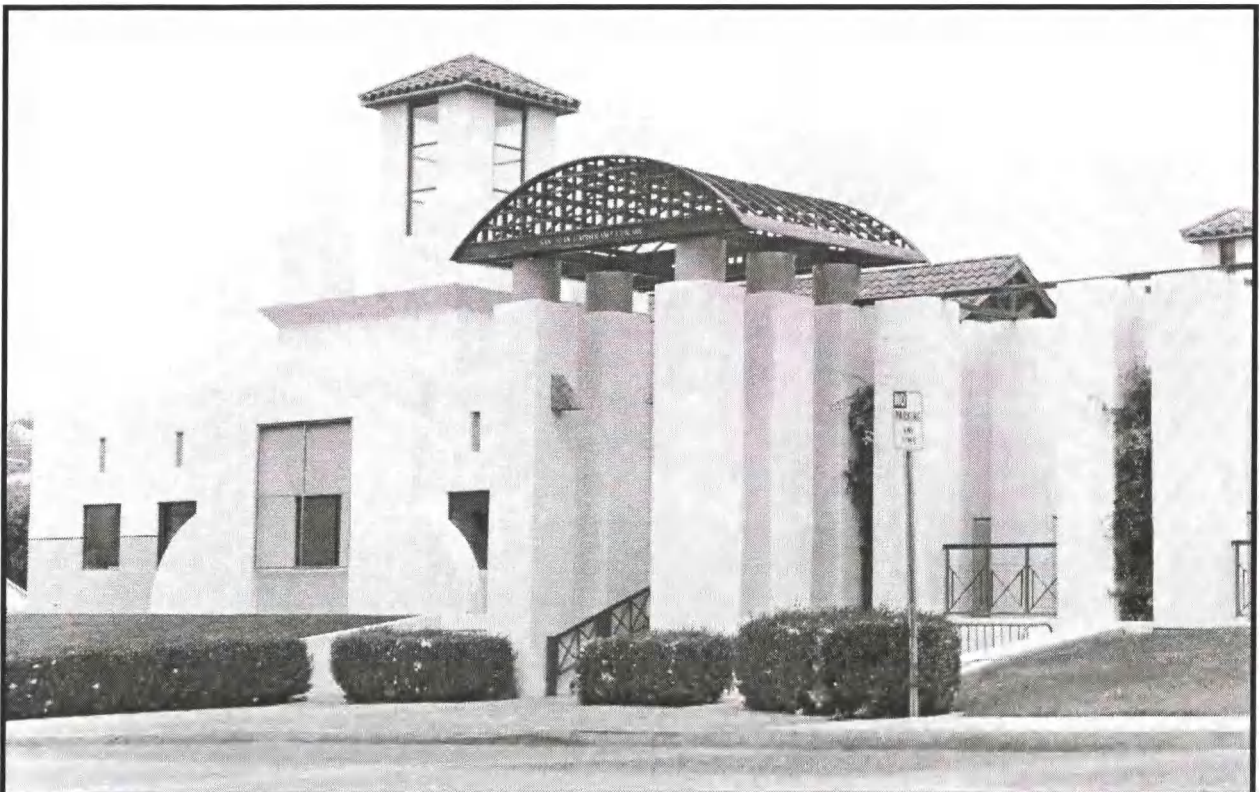
In June, 1982, the Library moved to its current quarters on Avenida Del Mar. Near the pier and historic downtown, the building, shared with a Senior Center, is adjacent to the Community Center, a weekly farmer's market, and a monthly arts and crafts show. The opening of the Library was celebrated with a parade which started at the old library site and ended at the new building, with actor Pat O'Brien as grand marshal. In the mid 1980's beautiful stained-glass windows were donated by the San Clemente Women's Club. The former library building is now a youth hostel, from which a steady stream of visitors in 2001 come to use the Library and its Internet computers. The Friends' Bookstore was added to the building in 1998.

Reflecting a large population of retirees, the branch has strong collections on travel, writing, and other leisure activities. With five miles of coastline and home to professional surfers, the branch also collects books on surfing.

San Juan Capistrano Regional Library

31495 El Camino Real, San Juan Capistrano, California, 92675

Opened	1921
Current Location	December 3, 1983
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. M. M. Parker
2000 Population	33,826 (San Juan Capistrano)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	92,432
Square Footage in 2001	12,000



San Juan Capistrano Regional Library

The history of the San Juan Capistrano Library dates back to 1921. For over 60 years, it moved from place to place: A room at the high school, an adobe building, and two storefronts. By the end of the 1970s, it became clear a new library was needed for the growing community, and the city wanted a building that would complement the historic Mission and be a part of its Spanish feel. Following a worldwide competition, Princeton architect Michael Graves was selected for his unconventional postmodern design incorporating elements of Mayan, Spanish and Egyptian architecture.

The Library, which was built on the former site of a high school gymnasium, occupies a hill with a breathtaking view of the reconstructed Mission church.

Once open, the building gained support as an asset to the community. Visitors came steadily from around the globe and were greeted by trained docents or by gracious branch manager Emily Jackson. Under her auspices a grant was obtained from the National Endowment for the Humanities for the creation of the lecture series, "Early California Reflections" which depicted the lives of the Acjacheman tribe and the early colonial settlers of the area.

The Library has always served as a venue for cultural events. In 1989, the Multicultural Arts Series was founded. Weekends are festive times when artists perform in the Library's courtyard where the water fountain, reflecting pool and cypress trees give concert-goers the feeling of a Mediterranean villa. In 1993, the Library received the American Library Association's John Cotton Dana Special Achievement Award, recognizing its multicultural performing and visual arts series.

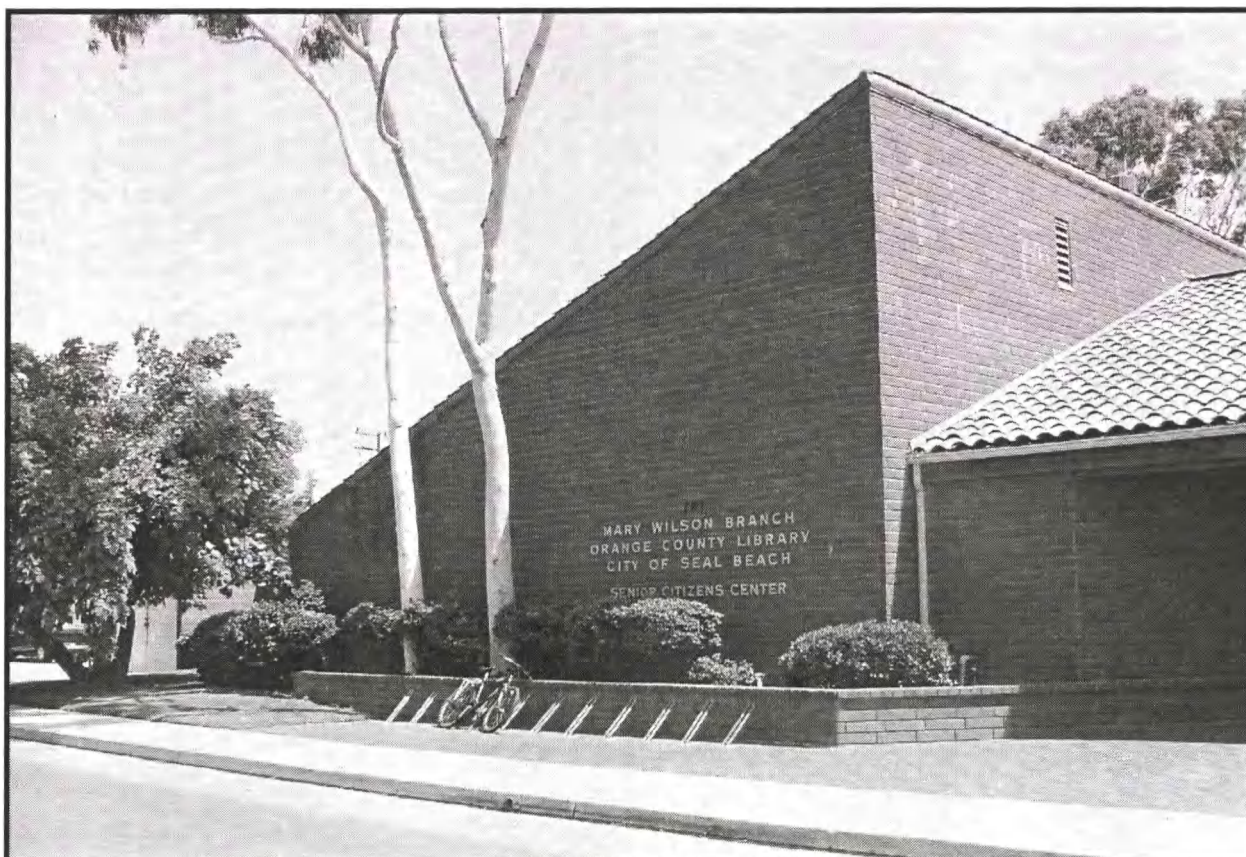
Famous figures at the San Juan Capistrano Library have included Ray Bradbury, who delivered the tenth anniversary tribute, and musicians including American blues artist John Hammond and Latin jazz artist Poncho Sanchez.

Today the Library serves its diverse community with a variety of resources, while offering regional reference assistance.

Youth services provide reading and activity programs for children and teens to encourage a lifelong love of reading. The Library also has a Spanish language collection to accommodate the growing number of Spanish speaking residents. The Friends of the Library also hold architectural tours of the Library. By combining new technology with traditional services, the Library will continue to meet the needs of San Juan Capistrano long into the 21st century.

Seal Beach/Mary Wilson Branch Library
707 Electric Avenue, Seal Beach, California 90740

Opened	October 12, 1921
Current Location	January 30, 1978
First Branch Librarian	Miss Sarah Dyson
2000 Population	24,157 (Seal Beach)
1920 Population	669 (Seal Beach)
Total Resources in 2001	61,166
Square Footage in 2001	10,000



Seal Beach/Mary Wilson Branch Library

Fall of 1921 saw the opening of the first eight branches of the Orange County Public Library system. The Seal Beach branch was one of the first, opening on October 12, 1921, in a room next to City Hall. It quickly outgrew this space and moved across the street. The original Seal Beach Library building is now a doctor's office, but the old book drop is still in place.

In 1978 a new library building was completed but not without controversy. When the new library was first proposed, many residents objected to building anything on the green belt, a large swath of grass and trees which runs through the center of Old Town Seal Beach. Some citizens were concerned that one building on the green belt would lead to others being built, until nothing was left of the park-like area, while others simply saw no need for a larger library facility. Emotional discussions followed, but ultimately the pro-library building people won out and an architect was hired.

Architects Anthony and Langford visited the old library to get a sense of library functionality prior to beginning the project. As a consequence the Library, now 23 years old, still functions well in 2001. With its vaulted open beam ceiling and brick walls, the appearance and usefulness of the building have both stood the test of time amazingly well.

Occasionally wildlife patronizes the Library. One summer not so long ago a swarm of swallows decided to make the Library their home, swooping down the chimney and nesting in corners. The staff sealed off the fireplace and spent an action-packed two days trapping and releasing the frantic birds outdoors.

The Seal Beach Mary Wilson Branch was named for the first Seal Beach librarian, Mary Wilson (not to be confused with a singer in the original Supremes, a questions that gets asked often). Wilson's picture still hangs in the Library's lobby.

The Friends of the Mary Wilson Library, started in 1973, operated the first purpose-built Friends bookstore and during the county bankruptcy, raised \$46,000 from the community to sustain the Library's hours.



Mrs. Mary Wilson (right), July 1957.

Silverado Branch Library

28192 Silverado Canyon Road, Silverado Canyon, California, 92676

Opened	1930
Current Location	July 30, 1964
First Branch Librarian	Miss Elsie McClelland
2000 Population	1,875 (Silverado, Modjeska & Williams Canyons)
1930 Population	118,674 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	17,013
Square Footage in 2001	1,119



Silverado Branch Library, circa 1949.



Silverado Branch Library, 2001.

Silverado Branch Library

The Silverado Library, the most rural of OCPL's branches, provides library service to residents in the eastern sector of the Santa Ana Mountains. The first librarian, Miss Elsie McClelland, wrote to Washington, D.C. in order to establish the first Post Office in the area. Once she received the go-ahead, a local hotel owner donated land and a log cabin to house the Post Office. McClelland then appealed to her friend, Orange County Librarian Margaret Morrison, who generously donated 60 books, which were shelved in the Post Office/Library. This cabin served as the first library until 1946, when McClelland retired and was given the building as a retirement home. The Post Office moved to its own building, and the Library was resettled into an old storeroom next to the "dime store," followed by a move to an old barbershop.

In 1964 the Library moved to a new building in the Silverado Shopping Center. The local newspaper was impressed that the building had the first air conditioning unit in Silverado, and urged its readers to visit the Library to bask in this modern wonder. Later on, the Library became the center for tourist information and research into Canyon history, as it was the only public building in Silverado Canyon.

During the floods of 1969, a transformer fell onto the building. The acting librarian, Viola Gammel, was evacuated by the fire crew, and carried piggy-back to her Modjeska Canyon home. The community assisted ailing librarian Gerry Klingensmith by collecting fines, checking books in and out, and helping patrons until she could return to work. The books were dried, and the Library remained open during the rebuilding of the damaged roof.

The Silverado Branch has been an Emergency Center Command Post during natural disasters. During the 1984 brush fire on Modjeska Grade, residents were unable to get home. Having no place to go, they stayed at the Library. During power outages, patrons bring lanterns and high beam flashlights to help students and patrons. In 1987, during the Silverado fire, the Fire Department set up the Library as a command post, and staff stayed for three days, communicating with residents by phone and providing information to walk-ins.

In 1995, Orange County bankruptcy issues concerned the community, which rallied en masse to preserve library service to the isolated area forming committees and hosting fundraisers. The Silverado Branch now enjoys an active volunteer program, which helps with staffing and fundraising.

Today's Branch Librarian, Lucille Cruz, has watched over this unusual branch since 1978, and received her first gift from a little boy, Lance Osborn. The gift, a drunken lizard in a Coors bottle, points out that working in this library brings the unexpected each and every day.

Stanton Branch Library

7850 Katella Avenue, Stanton, California, 90680

Opened	April 1, 1940
Current Location	April 8, 1974
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Geraldine Kahl
2000 Population	37,403 (Stanton)
1940 Population	130,760 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	66,722
Square Footage in 2001	5,890



Stanton Branch Library

In 1940, the Library was located in a one-room office at Cerritos and Beach Boulevard, opening with 962 books, checking out 2,525 items its first year. In 1956 the Library moved westerly on Cerritos Avenue into a storefront which it shared with a restaurant. Only a small partition separated the two establishments. It seems the Stanton Library of 1956 was somewhat a harbinger of the future. Who back then would have envisioned some libraries today with areas for coffee kiosks and snack bars?

In late 1956 the Library moved into the restaurant's portion of the storefront. The Library had no air conditioning, so both front and rear doors were kept open in good weather. A garden rake was kept on hand on windy days for gathering leaves blown in.

In 1973 the Library moved into a newly-built 5,890-square-foot building located at 7850 Katella Avenue. With the added space, library collections were significantly increased.

It was soon realized there was a need for Spanish language materials, as well as resources for learning English by Spanish-speaking patrons because of Stanton's growing Latino population. Consequently, Spanish language books, audiocassettes, videos and later, compact discs, were added to the collection. The Spanish language resources are an important part of the Library's holdings today, since almost half of the city's residents are of Hispanic origin.

In early 2001, one such Latino gentleman dropped by the Library. He had a question about the city's history and was directed to the pamphlet files. There he found a report written by one Charles Westra. The report goes on to say that "Romulo Toda Delsi was perhaps Orange County's most prolific man." It seems Mr. Delsi and his fourth wife had twins when he was 79 years old. He also had 12 children by this wife, Rosa, along with 35 children by three previous wives, for a total of 47 children. The patron pointed to Romulo's name and excitedly stated that this was his great-grandfather.

The Library survived the floods of 1992 when waves of water splashed over curb and sidewalk but luckily did not enter the front doors. Earthquakes have rumbled and jolted but left no damage. This, however, was not the case when an automobile drove through the south wall and destroyed shelving and damaged carpeting. A few months later this scenario mysteriously repeated itself at the south wall. Concrete filled six-inch posts now surround these walls, and no further damage has occurred—at least to the Library.

The Stanton Library recently acquired six Gates Foundation computers and two additional children's Internet computers. Patrons now have greater resources for information access than at any time in the Library's history. And by focusing on the needs of the community, the Stanton Library continues to provide the services its patrons expect and enjoy.

Tustin Branch Library

345 E. Main Street, Tustin, California, 92780

Opened	1931
Current Location	July 16, 1976
First Branch Librarian	Hazel Goudy
2000 Population	67,504 (Tustin)
1930 Population	118,674 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	141,970
Square Footage in 2001	15,000



Tustin Branch Library

Tustin has had a library serving the residents of surrounding Orange County territory since the 1890's. The first library was located in a Victorian schoolhouse, followed by a reading room inside the Grammar School, and after the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, the First National Bank building until 1938. The first paid librarian was Hazel Gowdy, who served from 1926 to 1959.

By 1906, the Library had 1,576 volumes, with the progress report stating: "The equipment is good and the library shows improvement. One of the most hopeful signs was the constantly increasing interest the pupils show in the use of the library."

In 1938, Mrs. Gowdy, along with Postmaster, PTA, and library board member Carolyn Campbell, interested Tustin High School Registrar Clarence Bowman, and the Chamber of Commerce to assist in acquiring better library quarters and furnishings. The Library moved to 130 West Main Street, and eight boys from the high school wood shop class, under the direction of Orville Northrup, built shelves, magazine racks, benches, and tables with funds and materials donated by individuals and local businesses.

Tustin Library offers special collections in Black History and Photography. The interest in photography goes back to 1939 when Hazel Gowdy reported photography as the most popular hobby in the Tustin area, and requested any books or back issues of magazines on the subject for her branch.

In 1949, the Library moved to a storefront location, then quickly to a new City Hall annex, followed by a move to the Fire Station on West Third Street, where it remained from 1950 to 1958. On July 7, 1958, the Library moved to its own building on Newport Avenue at Andrew Place. In 1963, the Library was expanded and parking added.

In the early 1970s, Tustin Branch Librarian Harriet Scheldrup and the Friends of the Tustin Library became active advocates for a new library building, which was dedicated on July 16, 1976. To honor the new 15,000-square-foot building, located in the Tustin Civic Center Complex, it was noted on the official opening day program that Tustin Library received as gifts a lace table cloth and a silver tea service, which was donated to the Friends.

The Tustin Library was renovated in 1984 to coincide with the conversion of the collection to an automated circulation control system. In November, 1990, some Library Headquarters staff relocated to the Library for 18 months, until moving into their new building in Santa Ana.

In 1996 the Tustin Library celebrated its 20th Anniversary at its Civic Center location with a re-dedication ceremony.

In order to meet the demands of an ever-growing and culturally diverse community, the Tustin Branch Library continues to maintain its African-American Studies and Spanish Language collections. In 2002 a collection of Russian Language resources will be added.

University Park Branch Library

4512 Sandburg Way, Irvine, California, 92612

Opened	October 20, 1975
First Branch Librarian	Bette Ewan
2000 Population	143,072 (Irvine)
1970 Population	1,420,386 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	101,337
Square Footage in 2001	11,097



University Park Branch Library

The University Park Library is located two miles from the University of California, Irvine. In 1979 the building won a design award from the American Institute of Architects, Orange County Chapter.

The natural wood walls create an attractive, cozy atmosphere with large windows bringing warming sunshine and beautiful sky into the Library. The opening day staff have memories of unpacking box after box of books while listening to the Eagles and new-comer Bruce Springsteen on the radio.

The Library opened with a collection of approximately 20,000 volumes serving a population of 35,000. During the first year of operation, over half the collection was in circulation at all times. Five years later there were over 25,000 registered borrowers.

Two years after the Library's opening, one of the first special programs highlighted another popular cultural event of the year—*Star Wars*. Apparently Darth Vader was to visit his ominous presence upon the Library, but had to cancel at the last minute. Anyone who remembers waiting in line for the movie in 1977 can well imagine the near riot that threatened the quiet neighborhood of University Park!

In 1984, when OCPL converted to its first automated circulation system, the Library was completely renovated. Several physical rearrangements were made to improve efficiency. The circulation area was modified and reference and children's service desks relocated. A Friends of the Library bookstore was added the following year. In the late 1990s, the Library again underwent some changes, notably renovation of the lobby, and an entire change in the look of the outside from the original dark wood to white stucco.

The Friends of the University Park Library have always played an important role in the Library's development. The Friends have been a vital part of the growth of the community as well as their neighborhood library. Several original members lobbied to have the Library locate in this neighborhood, raised their children together, and share memories of book sales and holiday programs.

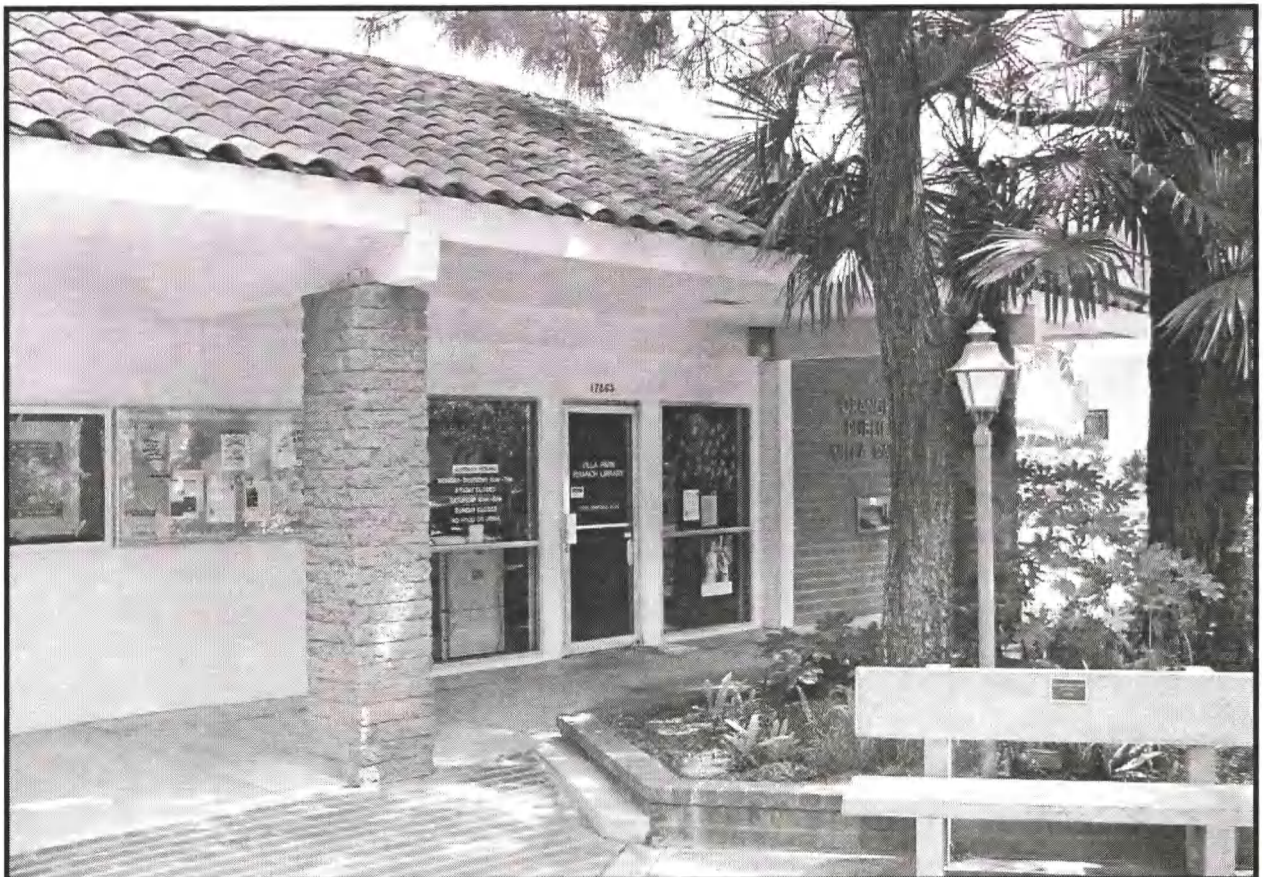
The income from successful book sales, and later from the used bookstore, has enabled the Library to enhance many collections, including foreign language materials. The Friends have also enhanced the building itself by purchasing artwork and furniture, and the annual summer reading program is greatly improved by their sponsorship.

As the multicultural population continues to grow in Irvine, University Park Library is responding by providing a multi-language collection as well as multicultural programs. People from different nations can read newspapers and magazines in their native languages, check out their favorite videos and audio tapes, and meet their hometown friends during their visit to the Library. Among the growing language collections at the branch are Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese and Farsi.

Villa Park Branch Library

17865 Santiago Boulevard, Villa Park, California, 92861

Opened	July 1, 1958
Currently Location	June 1, 1972
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Jean Ritter
2000 Population	5,999 (Villa Park)
1950 Population	216,224 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	27,253
Square Footage in 2001	2,016



Villa Park Branch Library

With assistance from the Villa Park Home and School League, the Villa Park Library opened on July 1, 1958, with 2,951 books. Circulation for the first year totaled 23,293, and 707 borrowers were registered.

Villa Park is a small community, fully surrounded by the city of Orange. The Library, housed in the same building with City Hall, is tucked in the northeast corner of the Ralph's Shopping Center, which is the only shopping area in the city, and therefore, the hub of the community. The Villa Park Library opened in its present location in June, 1972.

The Library is a community branch in every sense. An informal atmosphere prevails and residents "meet and greet" often. Serious research work also dominates the scene as adults as well as students from the four elementary schools, the junior high, and high school accomplish educational goals through books, other print and non-print materials, and the Internet. The Villa Park Branch is one that is well used and enjoyed by patrons of all ages.

Community interest in the Library is high, and many loyal volunteers offer assistance on a regular basis. Teens also work throughout the summer, helping younger children with the summer reading program and special events.

Some Villa Park patrons have unique ways of using the Library. One woman loves to read fiction, but tells staff certain books contain words that she must look up in the dictionary. Another patron reads so much he lightly draws a circle on page 50 so he can easily identify the books he has read.

Once a patron checked out a video which was due on a Saturday. She returned the tape on Monday after the Library opened. When she was told there was an overdue fine to pay, she exclaimed, "Oh, but I wasn't watching (the video) this morning!"

West Garden Grove Branch Library

11962 Bailey Street, Garden Grove, California, 92845

Opened	January 14, 1964
First Branch Librarian	Mrs. Myrna Donahue
2000 Population	165,196 (Garden Grove)
1960 Population	84,238 (Garden Grove)
Total Resources in 2001	62,190
Square Footage in 2001	5,279



West Garden Grove Branch Library

The West Garden Grove Branch Library opened on January 14, 1964 with approximately 14,000 volumes. This collection has been nurtured along by dedicated branch staff, including the 30-year-long Branch Librarian Mac Teverbaugh. Under his leadership, close relationships were forged with the community and the Friends of the Garden Grove Libraries.

The West Garden Grove Library was built in a brand new community of tract houses and apartment buildings, and the young families who raised their children there made the library a part of the community life. Hence, the Library and the community grew up together.

Every summer, the Summer Reading Program thrived under the guiding hand of Children's Librarian Elaine Kelby. The first day of the program generally featured staff dressing up in costume to match the program's theme. Kelby did a remarkable job during her tenure in helping to develop one of the best children's sections in the OCPL system, which was significant in its depth and breadth.

Teverbaugh, who had a passionate interest in jazz music from the time he was a teenager, put his personal stamp on the collection by developing a jazz collection at the Library, and when the Friends of the Garden Grove Libraries provided money for a record collection, this emphasis on jazz was extended to the audio collections as well. West Garden Grove became OCPL's jazz branch.

During lean times for OCPL, challenges for the West Garden Grove Branch included reduced hours, and fewer resources. Today, as funding for the Library is gradually being increased, its community support remains strong.



Volunteers have been active at West Garden Grove. Long-time patron Ray Gibbs took the initiative during the Library's lean times to volunteer, still gives the Library eight hours a week of his time, and has inspired other people to volunteer.

The Library partners with the Orange County Bar Association to provide community service opportunities for at-risk youth, and high school students often volunteer for academic as well as altruistic reasons.

Mac "Dr. Doolittle" Teverbaugh at opening day for Summer Reading, 1969.

Westminster Branch Library

8180 13th Street, Westminster, California, 92683

Opened	1921
Current Location	July 6, 1977
First Branch Librarian	Louise Turpin
2000 Population	88,207 (Westminster)
1920 Population	61,375 (Orange County)
Total Resources in 2001	166,191
Square Footage in 2001	18,437



Westminster Branch Library, circa 1957.



Westminster Branch Library, August, 2001.

Westminster Branch Library

In 1929, after eight years in a small rented room, the city of Westminster, by popular subscription, constructed a single room made of wood and stucco at North Plaza at Chestnut, in Sigler Park. This facility served as the community's branch until 1963, when the Library moved to the Westminster Shopping Center.

The move to its present-day quarters in the Westminster Civic Center took place in May, 1977. The new building combined the collection and staff of the two smaller OCPL branches in Westminster.

One day, not too long after the new building was opened, Children's Librarian Janine Wright decided the Library needed a pet for all children who came to the Library, especially for those who did not have a pet of their own. Since money was limited for purchase and upkeep, a hamster was the pet of choice. Wright held a name contest among the children, and the winning name was WPL, coined for the Westminster Public Library. WPL was a popular library pet, very active on his cage hamster ball, also accompanying Wright on school visits.

As word of WPL spread throughout OCPL, other hamsters became library pets. Wright created a hamster roller ball race between the library hamsters for National Library Week. It was discovered that encyclopedias had a use that normally would not be considered – they made great barriers to create racing lanes! The final race was held at the Westminster Library. The race, broadcast over television station KDOC, also had its own announcer for the "GREAT HAMSTER RACE." Which Muridae won the race is a fact lost in the past. But to many Westminster children, both WPL and Wright were big winners.

In 2001, library staff Mavis Crick and Jane Kato retired after almost 25 years of service, with retirement parties held at the Grand Garden Restaurant, whose building used to be the Bolsa Library. At the parties, staff reminisced about when the Library was about to close, and one of the front doors kept falling off.

Westminster has a history of long-tenure staff. In 1951 Mrs. H.B. Anderson, daughter-in-law of John Y. Anderson, Westminster's first settler, had been the librarian for 25 years.

Currently hanging in the Library's lobby is a picture and letter signed from Chief Justice Earl Warren dated March 13, 1962. It reads "To the young people of Westminster, California who are patrons of the Orange County Free Library, with the hope they will acquire the understanding of our history that will enable them to fulfill their civic responsibilities in the years to come. Earl Warren."

During the past 20 years many immigrants from Vietnam came to live in the city of Westminster. Today the Library has the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam, and the Westminster Library offers a large Vietnamese language book collection, which is heavily used.

